

REMARKS

I. Summary of Office Action

Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Sakura et al. U.S. Patent No. 4,214,587 (hereinafter "Sakura").

II. Summary of Telephonic Interview

On March 29, 2006, the undersigned's colleague, Brian E. Mack (Reg. No. 57,189), had a telephone conversation with the Examiner regarding the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of claim 1. Mr. Mack and the Examiner discussed specifically the proposed amendment of engaging tissue of an opening in the sidewall of one blood vessel and another blood vessel. The Examiner agreed that claim 1, as currently amended, was not anticipated by the Sakura reference because the Sakura reference refers only to end-to-end vessel connections. The Examiner indicated, however, that a new search of sidewall connections would have to be performed.

The undersigned thanks the Examiner for the courtesies extended during the telephone call.

III. Applicants' Reply

Applicants have amended claim 1 to more particularly define applicants' invention. For the reasons set forth in the

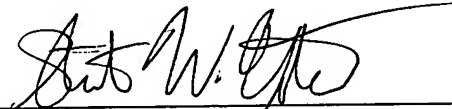
Reply to Final Office Action dated January 31, 2006, applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1 is allowable over the prior art of record.

Accordingly, applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn.

IV. Conclusion

The foregoing demonstrates that claim 1 is allowable. This application is therefore in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and allowance of this application are accordingly respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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